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Federal Communications Commission;

Aloha! I am writing these comments for Docket MM 05-311 to offer a concerned perspective from Hawaii relating to local franchising of cable TV as it affects broadband media localism.

As you know, commercial media alone do not adequately serve local community needs and interests, and consolidated ownership exacerbates the problem.

To maximize profits, commercial media minimize local programming. With distant owners controlling management decisions, the needs and interests of distinct local communities, especially lower-income people and minority groups who lack buying power are frequently ignored or misunderstood.

The commercial media marketplace alone does not and will not adequately support public interests, especially non-commercial speech.

Local franchising for cable TV and for broadband media is an essential safeguard for media localism.

Through a fair and publicly accountable franchising process, local communities can provide for local needs and interests to be met by requiring that media resources are provided as part of the cable and telecom operators' compensation for private use of public assets like land and spectrum.

Local communities need electronic green space in the endless strip mall of commercial media. Free PEG access channels, I-Net resources and the funds to operate them are all essential parts of our system of democratic media. Local government franchising ensures that citizens themselves will govern the local use of those non-commercial public, educational and governmental access media resources.

Cable access channels, networks and local funding provide an essential free speech forum. Appropriately, local government franchise authorities collect compensation for the private commercial use of public rights-of-way by media corporations while protecting local consumers. To ensure fairness in meeting local needs and interests, local media access resources and consumer protections must be accountable to local government jurisdictions.

A policy approach similar to local franchising of cable TV should be considered for broadcast, satellite and IP-enabled media. Local governments could be given broader local oversight and compensation for use of public spectrum, rights of

way and other public resources that are used by commercial media to serve the constituents of local jurisdictions. Through a locally accountable process, broadcast, broadband wireline, and satellite transmission capacity could be set aside to benefit local communities. Local regulation and local governance over public service media resources are essential principles of the community access media model.

Local governments in communities across America must have meaningful and well-defined roles to adequately protect media consumers and to effectively advocate for local needs and interests to be met. Federal regulation is a centralized, opaque process favoring very powerful corporate interests who privately gain from ineffective or non-existent local regulation in the public interest.

Federal consumer protections and public interest rules are so ineffective that commercial media regularly fail to meet the basic communication needs of local communities. To make matters worse, consolidated media ownership favors private commercial interests that are detached from local communities and driven by non-local profit motives.

To minimize harm from this imbalance of media market power, local governments and communities must have authority to regulate and develop local media solutions that meet people's needs.

The FCC needs a media localism policy of Home Rule.

Local franchising authorities for cable and telecommunications are the appropriate jurisdictions to oversee community needs ascertainments and related public service obligations. Local and State jurisdictions can provide meaningful, appropriate oversight authority to protect consumers, uphold First Amendment principles and properly represent local public needs and interests.

Sincerely,

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